



J. TYLER McCAULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 525
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012-2766
PHONE: (213) 974-8301 FAX: (213) 626-5427

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TO: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – CRITTENTON
SERVICES OF ORANGE COUNTY, SPIRIT HOUSE**

We have completed a review of Crittenton Services of Orange County, Spirit House. Spirit House contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Probation Department (Probation). Spirit House is a twelve-bed facility, located in Orange County, that provides care for children ages 6-12 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Spirit House was providing services for five Los Angeles County DCFS children, three Orange County children and one San Bernardino child.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review was to verify that Spirit House was providing the services outlined in its Program Statement. Additionally, the review covered basic child safety and licensing issues and included an evaluation of Spirit House's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with two children placed with Spirit House at the time of the monitoring visit. The interviews with the residents were designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by Spirit House and to ensure its adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, Spirit House is providing the services outlined in its Program Statement. However, we noted that Spirit House needs to make several repairs to its facility.

Attached is a detailed report of the review findings.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the agency's management. The agency's management is required to provide DCFS with a written corrective action plan within fifteen days from the receipt of this report. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Patrick McMahon at (213) 974-0729.

JTM:PM:CC

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Richard Shumsky, Chief Probation Officer
Joyce Cappelle, Executive Director, Crittenton Services of Orange County

CRITTENTON SERVICES OF ORANGE COUNTY

Spirit House

901 East Chapman Avenue

Fullerton, CA 92632

323-794-6817

License No.: 306001320

Rate Classification Level: 12

I. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

(Facility Based - No Sample)

Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Spirit House is one of five agencies operated by Crittenton Services of Orange County. The two-story home is located in a residential/business neighborhood in Fullerton and blends in with the other homes in the neighborhood.

The home was nicely decorated, with spacious bedrooms personalized by the residents. However, some areas were in need of improvement.

In the kitchen and laundry room, the floor tile needed cleaning. There were ink stains on the dining room table and the curtains in the living room also needed cleaning. In the downstairs bathroom, the shower and the floor needed cleaning. Carpeting throughout the house need cleaning and there was writing on the ceiling in some areas.

In bedroom number one, there was a knob missing from a dresser drawer, and in bedrooms number two and three, the curtains needed cleaning.

Spirit House had age-appropriate play equipment including board games, skateboards, basketball hoops, video tapes, books, a TV, and VCR. However, there were several bicycles with flat tires or damaged seats.

Meals were brought in from the agency's main campus. There was a sufficient supply of properly stored frozen foods, milk, cereals, snacks, and fresh fruit.

Recommendations

1. Spirit House management:

- a. Clean floor tile throughout the facility.**
- b. Remove writing from the dining room table and the ceiling.**

- c. Clean the curtains in the living room and resident bedrooms number two and three.
- d. Clean the downstairs bathroom.
- e. Clean the carpet throughout the facility.
- f. Replace the missing dresser drawer knob in bedroom number one.
- g. Repair the broken bicycles.

II. PROGRAM SERVICES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The residents met Spirit House's population criteria as outlined in their program statement and received an initial diagnostic assessment.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) were realistic, measurable, and time specific. The residents and their placement workers participated in developing and updating the NSPs.

The residents' Quarterly Reports were current, comprehensive, timely, and focused on the goals on their NSPs.

The residents were receiving individual and group therapy.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for the section.

III. EDUCATIONAL AND EMANCIPATION SERVICES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Both residents were enrolled in public school and their records contained report cards and/or progress reports. The residents reported that they were assisted with their school work and felt that staff was supportive of their academic progress.

The residents were able to manage their allowance without assistance from staff. Neither resident was old enough for emancipation or vocational services.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. RECREATION AND ACTIVITIES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Spirit House followed a monthly activity schedule developed by the staff and residents. Residents were encouraged to participate in activities that they desired, and had the opportunity to watch television, play games, and read at free times during the day.

Transportation was provided to and from activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

There were nine residents placed in Spirit House at the time of the review. A review of case files was conducted for the five Los Angeles (LA) County residents prescribed psychotropic medications.

Comments:

Spirit House maintains appropriate medication logs. There were current court authorizations for the LA County residents receiving psychotropic medication.

Documentation confirmed that the children were routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist for a review of their medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. PERSONAL RIGHTS

Method of assessment – Resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The residents were presented with the policies, rules and regulations when placed at the group home. The residents reported satisfaction with the home and staff. The residents reported that staff was “nice.” Both stated that the rules were fair.

Both residents reported that they felt safe in the home and that a sufficient number of staff was always in the home when residents were present. Both residents rated the physical facility as “good.”

Resident chores included the maintenance of their own rooms and common areas which the residents did not feel were too difficult.

Both residents were able to have telephone contact with their social workers and families, and reported that there was privacy during visits and telephone calls. Both residents indicated that they had religious freedom, and that their health care needs were being met.

The residents were aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. CLOTHING AND ALLOWANCE

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Spirit House provided appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the residents. Spirit House supplied its residents with the required monthly clothing allowance in the amount of fifty dollars, and the residents were given the opportunity to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to the residents was of good quality and sufficient quantity.

The residents received the required minimum weekly allowance, and were able to earn an increase based on the agency's behavioral system.

Spirit House provided residents with adequate personal care items and sufficient, secure space to store their personal items.

The residents had life books.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.